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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 7th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. HUDYMA (Ukraine)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 75: EFFECTS OF ATOMIC RADIATION (A/49/46; A/C.4/49/L.2)

1. The CHAIRMAN drew the attention of the members of the Committee to the report of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation contained in document A/49/46.

2. Mr. GUILLEN (Peru), introducing the report of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation (UNSCEAR), said that the report summarized the conclusions of two scientific annexes entitled "Epidemiological studies of radiation carcinogenesis" and "Adaptive responses to radiation in cells and organisms", and provided brief information on its work in studying the effects of radiation on the environment. He also submitted for consideration by the Fourth Committee draft resolution A/C.4/49/L.2 and expressed the hope that as in previous years, it would be adopted by consensus.

3. Mr. KONIK (Poland) said that since its establishment in 1955 the Scientific Committee had prepared reports that were used as reference documents by scientists throughout the world and served as the basis for international and national standards for radiation protection. His delegation commended the valuable contribution by the Scientific Committee to enhancing knowledge of the levels, effects and risks of atomic radiation, welcomed the results achieved by UNSCEAR and its fruitful cooperation with other international bodies including the United Nations Environment Programme, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Health Organization, the International Labour Organization, the International Atomic Energy Agency and the International Commission on Radiological Protection, and stressed the need to further develop that cooperation. Poland was a sponsor of the draft resolution on the effects of atomic radiation and hoped that it would be adopted by consensus.

4. Mr. KONG Deyong (China) said that the effects of atomic radiation were closely linked to people's health as well as the issues of environment and development, which caused great concern in the world today.

5. His Government, which attached great importance to environment and development, had, in 1994, adopted and published "China's Agenda 21", an important strategic document aimed at accelerating economic development and promoting social progress at the same time. It also dealt with such an important aspect of the issue as the prevention of hazards to the environment and mankind caused by radioactive waste. The work of the Scientific Committee would be important for implementing that strategy. The Chinese Government was willing, as always, to continue to support the work of that Committee and hoped that, with the support of all Member States, it would make a great contribution to protecting all States against atomic radiation.

6. Mr. CHAUDHRY (Pakistan) said that there was a greater willingness among States to exchange information and cooperate in the maintenance of international

peace and security as well as the enhancement of their economic well-being. Those efforts should aim at not only minimizing the risks, but also promoting the peaceful uses, of nuclear technology for the common benefit of all mankind.

7. Pakistan welcomed the current moratorium on nuclear testing and had consistently supported efforts for the early conclusion of a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty. His country also remained convinced of the need for countries to conclude regional nuclear-test-ban agreements. It had put forward a number of substantive proposals to establish a nuclear non-proliferation regime in South Asia and was prepared to engage in a constructive dialogue to promote that process.

8. His delegation cautioned against the application of discriminatory, inequitable and selective restrictions on the transfer of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes. It was the responsibility of developed countries to extend maximum assistance to developing countries in harnessing the atom for peaceful uses to enable them to meet the socio-economic requirements of their people. Of equal importance was the exchange of technology and information to ensure nuclear safety, including the provision of spare parts for nuclear facilities established through such cooperation. Pakistan appreciated and shared international concern with regard to nuclear non-proliferation. Nevertheless, the requirements of proper maintenance and acceptable safety standards called for a more balanced, equitable and mutually beneficial pragmatic approach. In that context, his delegation commended the efforts by IAEA to help ensure the flow of information on nuclear safety and believed that maintaining adequate safety standards at nuclear sites world-wide was in the interest of all countries.

9. In conclusion, he pointed out that Pakistan had joined the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.4/49/L.2.

10. Mr. KYRYCHENKO (Ukraine) said that the inclusion of the item entitled "Effects of atomic radiation" on the agenda of the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly was an important step. The urgent nature of that question stemmed from the serious consequences of the Chernobyl disaster and the need to expand international cooperation to minimize them.

11. The health of the population that had been affected by the accident was cause for particular concern at the current time. In terms of disease caused by the Chernobyl accident, more than 20,000 persons had been recognized as invalids. At the same time, Ukraine, which was undergoing a process of economic reform, was unable, owing to a lack of diagnostic and medical equipment and medicine, to fully carry out medical and genetic monitoring and provide specialized medical care to the people affected.

12. In the isolated area of the Chernobyl atomic power station, there was a whole range of problems, including those related to the burial of radioactive waste, the condition of the upper dam on the Pripyat River and the real danger of contamination of the Dnepr River. His delegation also pointed out that after the disintegration of the USSR, the basic onus of the problems connected with

making the Ukrytie facility an ecologically safe system had fallen on Ukraine. Referring to the conclusions by participants in the international symposium "Ukrytie Safety - 1994" on the condition of the Ukrytie facility, and the findings by specialists, he said that his country had the following priorities: construction of the Ukrytie-2 facility; resolving the questions related to the safety of the Chernobyl plant; introduction of new capacities at other atomic power plants and closing of the Chernobyl plant; and making the 30-kilometre Chernobyl zone an ecologically safe area.

13. His delegation expressed appreciation to the Commission of the European Union, which was financing the development of the technical and economic basis for the project aimed at stabilizing the Ukrytie facility and building the Ukrytie-2 facility over it. Ukraine valued highly the attention given to the Chernobyl problems by the United Nations, international organizations and governmental bodies. The international community was providing Ukraine with truly invaluable assistance and, for that reason, the results of the scientific research into the effects of radiation on man and the environment should also serve the interests of all mankind. At the current time, 70 projects were being implemented in Ukraine through the United Nations and the European Union and on a bilateral basis. There was a need to ensure clear coordination and priority-based financing of projects that provided maximum practical assistance to the population affected. In that connection, he expressed the hope that the United Nations Coordinator of International Cooperation for Chernobyl would take the necessary steps in that area.

14. His delegation viewed the activities of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation as essential and useful with regard to the dissemination of knowledge on the levels, effects and danger of atomic radiation and called for maintaining the principle of the Committee's scientific independence. At the same time, UNSCEAR was conducting insufficient work in terms of the collection and study of information on atomic and ionizing radiation and analysing its effects on man and the environment.

15. His delegation supported the proposal by the Republic of Belarus on the holding in 1996 in Minsk, under the auspices of UNSCEAR, of an international scientific conference to coincide with the tenth anniversary of the accident at the Chernobyl plant. Lastly, he pointed out that the problems caused by Chernobyl would exist for decades and centuries and overcoming them in the future would require a much greater effort on the part of the world community.

16. Mr. HELLBECK (Germany), speaking on behalf of the European Union as well as Austria, Finland, Norway and Sweden, noted that the Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation had been called upon to play an increasingly important role in providing information, as well as education and protection of the world community because of the wider use in recent years of artificial sources of ionizing radiation in varied applications, and welcomed the Committee's twelfth substantive report (A/49/46), in particular its conclusions on the findings of epidemiological studies of radiation carcinogenesis and adaptive responses to radiation in cells and organisms.

17. The European Union and Austria, Finland, Norway and Sweden welcomed the progress achieved by the Scientific Committee during the period under review and appreciated its efficient cooperation with various programmes, organizations and agencies. The further development of science and technology, as well as of the applications of sources of ionizing radiation, necessitated closer cooperation and coordination of research in that field.

18. Mr. VERDIER (Argentina) said that his country attached great significance to the item under discussion. A concrete expression of its interest in the topic was the fact that many environmental groups had disagreed with studies conducted in Argentina concerning the possible establishment of a nuclear-waste storage facility. Argentina also shared the concern of the international community with regard to the recent detonation of a nuclear device in China. That test could jeopardize the moratorium declared by the other nuclear Powers and have unfortunate consequences for the current international climate, which was favourable for conducting negotiations on the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty.

19. The nuclear agreements between Brazil and Argentina and between both countries and the International Atomic Energy Agency had contributed to the full entry into force of the Treaty of Tlatelolco; Argentina's adherence to the guiding principles concerning the export of dual-purpose materials adopted by the Nuclear Suppliers Group was eloquent testimony to the exclusively peaceful nature of the Brazilian-Argentine plan for using nuclear energy. Argentina was closely studying the work of the Scientific Committee, in which it had participated since 1955, and welcomed the Committee's report. As in the past, Argentina was co-sponsoring the relevant draft resolution (A/C.4/49/L.2), and urged other delegations to adopt it by consensus.

20. Mr. TASCHEREAU (Canada) said that Canada fully supported the work of the Scientific Committee and would continue to play an active role in it. The data evaluations performed by the Committee had been most useful to Canada in the development of its own regulations, and Canada urged the continuation of those worthwhile activities. That was why Canada had agreed to co-sponsor the current year's draft resolution. Canada was pleased to note the respect and international gratitude which the Scientific Committee had earned through the high quality of its work.

21. The CHAIRMAN said that Finland had joined the list of sponsors of draft resolution A/C.4/49/L.2.

AGENDA ITEM 74: PROTECTION AND SECURITY OF SMALL STATES (A/49/353)

22. Mr. ZAKI (Maldives) drew attention to the Secretary-General's report on the protection and security of small States (A/49/353). His delegation made special note of paragraph 8, which stated that the creation of a climate of support that could serve as a basis for protecting the security of small States was of paramount importance. That was a matter of international importance in relation to the purposes and objectives of the Charter and in view of the apprehensions of small States like Maldives which had no resources to defend themselves from external threats or any form of aggression, whether from mercenaries, terrorists

or organized drug-related criminals. The subject before the Committee had gained gravity over the past few years, especially considering the convenience of obtaining weapons of war from international markets and the increase in the incidences of serious internal and cross-border conflicts in many countries throughout the globe. The international community was currently witnessing a fast-rising trend in the recourse to the use of force to settle disputes, an outrageous increase in acts of terrorism, and drug-related criminals were operating on a scale never seen before.

23. Under the Charter, the United Nations had the potential to muster collective security power. Undoubtedly, the political will of Member States, especially the permanent members of the Security Council, had to constitute the driving force behind any arrangement that might be formulated consistent with the Charter and on a universal basis.

24. Some work on that issue had already been done and was continuing. For example, General Assembly resolution 43/78 H of 7 December 1988, the aim of which was to strengthen international peace and security. Furthermore, the revival of the concept of strengthening and enhancing the linkage between regional arrangements and organizations with the United Nations system had been very encouraging in terms of developing the area of confidence-building measures. The development and augmentation of the effectiveness of the Security Council would be of fundamental importance in dealing with the question of the protection and security of small States.

25. Like many small States, Maldives had placed its faith in the United Nations as the guarantor of its sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity. Maldives had had bitter experience at great cost. That was why it considered it of paramount importance to draw the attention of the international community to its plight. At the same time it remained convinced that the purposes and principles of the Charter provided adequate room for action. Maldives had taken steps to include the item in the agenda of the General Assembly in 1989, and with the assistance of a number of other Member States had continued its efforts in 1991. The General Assembly had adopted two resolutions on that item: resolution 44/51 in 1989 and 46/43 in 1991. Both of them had explicitly recognized some salient features of the item. Firstly, small States were particularly vulnerable to external threats and acts of aggression and interference in their internal affairs. Secondly, the protection and security of small States was related to the overall subject of international peace and security. Thirdly, small States had special needs in the exercise of their inherent right to safeguard and maintain their sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity. Fourthly, mercenaries, terrorists and drug-related criminals and their organizations could be a real danger to small States.

26. Mr. HURST (Antigua and Barbuda), speaking on behalf of the 12 member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), said that the British Commonwealth had undertaken to study the vulnerability of the 19 small States it embraced, and CARICOM attached great importance to the Commonwealth initiative. He applauded Maldives for bringing that question to the attention of the United Nations and

the international community. He wished to focus the debate mainly on external attacks and outside interference in the affairs of small States.

27. Nobody could fail to recognize the importance of protecting small States from bandits, mercenaries, criminals, and drug-smugglers who hatched plots to undermine legitimate authority. He was also aware that the possibility of clashes over border disputes could not be completely eliminated. Eight of the 12 CARICOM countries had formed a regional security system which represented a pooling of their limited resources for collective defence. Recognizing the inability of any one CARICOM State to repel a threat to its territorial integrity, those States were acting on the principle of collective self-defence. They considered it necessary, however, to establish mechanisms embracing several subregions, or mechanisms that could grow out of well-bonded associations that were not regional. Those countries could also engage in larger regional collaboration under the aegis of the United Nations. The CARICOM countries had listened with interest to the views of the Foreign Minister of the Netherlands in his address to the General Assembly when he proposed the establishment of a permanent "fire brigade" capable of rapid deployment in times of urgency. Jamaica had proposed a similar approach three years before, and the 12 CARICOM nations were repeating the proposal at the current meeting.

28. Mr. CHOR (Singapore) said that, while the situation of the small States had substantially improved with the end of the cold war, some of those States which had been courted by the super-Powers had lost the support of their former patrons and were now forced to fend for themselves.

29. Soon after the end of the cold war the Gulf crisis had erupted, provoked by the invasion by a foreign State of the territory of a small Member State, namely Kuwait. Fortunately, the international community and the United Nations had risen swiftly to meet the challenge. In so doing, they had sent an unmistakable signal to would-be regional super-Powers that others' territories were not "up for grabs". It was uncertain, however, whether such collective action would be taken again, should the sovereignty and territorial integrity of other small States be violated.

30. The concern of small States was also related to their frequent inability to mobilize adequate resources to counter external threats. Furthermore, if struck by natural disasters, they were usually unable to cope on their own with the consequences. Furthermore, threats to small States could also take more subtle forms, such as economic pressure. Many small States were also targeted by international terrorists and criminal organizations, arms and drug cartels and armed groups, for their own purposes. In that context, he recalled the invasion and near conquest of Maldives in 1988 by a small group of armed individuals.

31. Small States could take independent measures to strengthen their security. They must be constantly vigilant and forward-looking, in order to minimize errors and maximize their advantages. All States must endeavour to ensure the proper organization of their defence. Similarly, they must establish contingency measures in the event of natural disasters. Thus, in Singapore a citizen civil-defence force had been gradually established, comprising about

4 per cent of the population, to provide emergency functions, such as fire-fighting and rescue services in major incidents.

32. He welcomed the Secretary-General's report (A/49/353), in which the creation of a climate of support that could serve as a basis for prctecting the security of small States was regarded as a task of paramount importance. Where Singapore was concerned, that climate of support was provided by its membership in the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN). The experience of ASEAN in that area was especially relevant. The countries of South-East Asia, including Singapore, had also signed the Treaty of Amity and had participated in the ASEAN Regional Forum.

33. Small States needed the United Nations, where they could mobilize international support and seek assistance. At the current time they should keep reminding the five permanent members of the Security Council of the need for consistency in upholding the Charter and in implementing resolutions, so that in the event of any aggression, the Organization's reaction would be the same as in Kuwait. It was in the interest of small States - and it was often their only guarantee - to have a strong and effective United Nations, which strictly upheld international law. For their part, small States had the obligation to play an active and constructive role in the United Nations as a whole.

34. The security of small States was not simply a military or political matter. An equally important aspect was the need to help small States to achieve economic self-sufficiency, a key element of which was economic development. In that respect the United Nations and its relevant agencies had an important role to play in ensuring that due attention was accorded to the special needs and concerns of small States in trade and development. The provision of such assistance to small States would be a far-sighted investment in the maintenance of international peace and security.

35. Mr. ERDENECHULUUN (Mongolia) said that his country, like many other small nations, identified its security with the work of the United Nations, which was the primary guarantor of their independence and peaceful development. In that context, greater importance was attached to the ongoing discussions on the reform of the Security Council. In his country's view, ways and means should be found to enhance the effectiveness of the Council's work by widening the participation of small States in its work.

36. The Organization's activities over the past few years testified to the need to improve and strengthen mechanisms for responding to conflict situations. Preventive diplomacy and peacemaking were increasingly important in the maintenance of international peace and security, since, as the Secretary-General had noted, they were highly cost-effective. In addition to United Nations efforts, however, regional arrangements and agencies also possessed a potential that should be utilized in the service of preventive diplomacy and peacemaking. In that connection, Mongolia highly appreciated the efforts by ASEAN to promote political dialogue and consultations in the Asia-Pacific region, by initiating the establishment of the ASEAN Regional Forum, whose first meeting, held in Bangkok in July 1994, had decided to carry out a number of practical confidence-

building measures in the region. Mongolia fully shared the view that the successful implementation of regional cooperation and integration programmes could strengthen the security assurances, the continued economic development and the social progress of small and economically vulnerable countries.

37. Although only a few small States featured among the world's poorest countries, they all faced severe economic problems. They were generally characterized by low income and savings rates, a lack of skilled manpower and, with a few exceptions, a lack of natural resources. Their small populations limited the size of their domestic markets, raising the cost of production and services and hampering economic development. Furthermore, transport and communication were rendered difficult and expensive. As a result, those States were heavily dependent on foreign financial and technical assistance and on foreign markets. The constant threat to economic independence, economic stability and progress caused by those powerful external economic forces underlay most of the security problems of small States. It should not be forgotten, however, that the availability of natural resources could also be the cause of vulnerability, as had happened with Kuwait. Beside economic and military threats, small States might be endangered by environmental factors, demographic and ethnic imbalances, drug-trafficking and other problems. Those non-military aspects of the security of small States should be addressed through extensive and effective international cooperation.

38. In the modern interdependent world, the geographical remoteness of a State was no safeguard. A problem arising in one part of the world could reverberate to its furthest corners. Since the international order depended on the stability and security of small States, the provision of appropriate safeguards was in the interests of all States. That was why the agenda item under consideration was widely accorded such paramount importance, and that too must be borne in mind in restructuring and revitalizing the work of the United Nations, particularly within the context of the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization, of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council, and in the follow-up to the report "An Agenda for Peace". As a sponsor of the draft resolution on the item, his delegation hoped that it would be adopted by consensus.

39. Mr. AL-OTAIBI (Kuwait) said that, not withstanding the atmosphere of détente that now prevailed in international relations, the concern of small States regarding security problems persisted, undermining their hopes of achieving social and economic progress.

40. Kuwait was a small State which pursued a policy of peace and which had never made, and would never make, territorial claims on other States. Its only wish was to live in peace and security, in a climate of confidence and good will, and to maintain relations based on mutual respect, common interests, good neighbourliness and universal adherence to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the rules of international law governing relations between States. It was for that reason that Kuwait had been able to establish friendly relations with the majority of the world's States, the genuineness of which had

been demonstrated at the time of the occupation of Kuwait by Iraq in 1990, when many States throughout the world had rallied to the support of Kuwait and had supported its just cause.

41. He noted that for a number of years the situation in the Gulf region had remained unstable, that the security of the States of the region was threatened, and that their hopes for stability remained fragile. The reason for that was the policy of the Iraqi regime and its aggressive conduct. Violations by the Iraqi regime of Security Council resolutions constituted attempts to undermine both the security and independence of Kuwait and of the States of the region as a whole, and also international security. Recalling the recent concentration of Iraqi forces on the border with Kuwait, he said that those actions were evidence of the danger posed by the Iraqi regime, which continued openly to flout the rules of international law, and to violate the provisions of Security Council resolutions concerning its acts of aggression and the terms of the cease-fire laid down in Security Council resolution 687 (1991), which had been accepted unreservedly by Iraq.

42. He expressed his country's gratitude to those States that had rallied to its support, and to other States and regional organizations that had expressed regret in connection with similar irresponsible acts of provocation. His delegation commended the Security Council for its effective actions in response to the threats by Iraq and, in that connection, alluded to the statement by its President on 10 October 1994 and to Security Council resolution 949 (1994). The firm stance taken by the Council with regard to the security, independence and territorial integrity of Kuwait constituted a commendable approach to preventive diplomacy and evidence of full adherence to the principle of collective security, and was a striking manifestation of the purposes and principles of the United Nations. In that connection, his delegation expressed gratitude to the members of the Security Council on behalf of the people and Government of Kuwait.

43. Referring to the report of the Secretary-General on protection and security of small States, he thanked the Secretary-General for his untiring efforts to maintain international peace and security. His delegation supported the view, expressed in that report, that as the international order could be undermined by the instability or lack of security of small States, it was in the general interest to safeguard their security.

44. In conclusion, he said that his delegation supported the draft resolution submitted by Maldives, and was joining its sponsors.

45. Mr. HELLBECK (Germany), speaking on behalf of the European Union and of Austria, Finland, Norway and Sweden, said that they hoped that the draft resolution which had been submitted would be adopted without a vote, in accordance with the practice followed in previous years. As they had stated at the forty-fourth and forty-sixth sessions of the General Assembly, the European Union and its member States adhered strictly to the principle of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States, irrespective of their size, and also to the other principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. All those

principles applied equally to all States. Strict adherence to the rules of international law was the best guarantee of preserving and reinforcing the security of all States, irrespective of their size.

46. The United Nations was the acknowledged mechanism for the maintenance of international peace and security. Accordingly, the interests of small States were best served by ensuring that the instruments and procedures of the United Nations functioned effectively. However, present-day security matters also required broader cooperation at the regional level; that would substantially reduce the burden on the United Nations in accordance with the provisions of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations.

47. Mr. MUTAYA (Malaysia) said that the first purpose of the United Nations was the maintenance of international peace and security, and that unconditional respect by all States for all the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, including the principles of sovereign equality, non-interference and the peaceful settlement of international disputes, remained at the core of international security.

48. The faithful fulfilment of all obligations under the Charter was vital in order to ensure peace and security. Regrettably, in practice those principles were sometimes violated, and that gave rise to a certain feeling of insecurity, especially among small States. Because of their inherent vulnerability to external threats and interference, small States deserved special attention and support. In recognition of that situation, Malaysia, itself a small State, had been a sponsor of General Assembly resolution 46/43 of 9 December 1991.

49. His delegation agreed with the comment made by the Secretary-General in his report (A/49/353), concerning the importance of "creating an environment of support" to serve as a basis for safeguarding the security of small States. In that regard, the role of the United Nations in promoting the implementation of confidence-building measures was of paramount importance.

50. Regional organizations, too, had a role to play in the maintenance of international peace and security, and their potential in that area should be fully tapped. That arrangement could provide the basis for a rich network of governmental and non-governmental organizations in support of the efforts of the United Nations. Regional dialogue and cooperation would not only serve as a vehicle for the social and economic advancement of the parties, but would also increase their sense of security. That had been the rationale underlying the formation in 1967 of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), the activities of which had greatly contributed to the stability and security not only of its members, but also of the region as a whole.

51. The small States themselves also had a role to play in ensuring their own security. However, in order for national Governments to undertake specific strategies and actions, a favourable external environment was important. In that regard the international community must assist in creating resilient economies in the small States which would be capable of bringing about social and economic progress.

52. His delegation fully supported the main thrust of the draft resolution initiated by Maldives, concerning the importance of the full and unconditional respect by all States for all the principles of the Charter. As a strong supporter of the initiative taken by the small States and as a sponsor of the draft resolution, Malaysia urged members of the Committee to adopt it by consensus.

53. Mr. KANAKARATNE (Sri Lanka) said that his delegation wished to convey its appreciation to the Secretary-General for the action he had taken pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 44/51 of 8 December 1989 and 46/43 of 9 December 1991 and for the valuable information and observations he had submitted in his reports (A/46/339 and A/49/353) to assist the Committee's deliberations. His delegation also regarded as particularly valuable the reply of the Government of Maldives of 14 December 1992 in which it had fully explained why small States turned to the United Nations for protection and security.

54. At a plenary meeting of the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session, the representative of Sri Lanka had stated that the security and development of small countries like his own depended largely on the United Nations and that the adherence of all Member States to the principles of respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, non-interference in internal affairs, mutual respect and equality, the peaceful settlement of disputes and peaceful co-existence was fundamental. That was why Sri Lanka had supported the initiative of Maldives to include the item in the agenda of the General Assembly and why it was a sponsor of the draft resolution submitted under the item.

55. Although the division of the world into two camps and confrontation in international relations belonged to the past, the fears of small States regarding the protection of their sovereignty and territorial integrity had not been allayed but had, rather, increased. In the recent past, small States had been subjected to attacks by the armed forces of more powerful States, as well as by armed mercenaries and terrorists. Such situations more often than not created a threat to peace and security not only in the specific region involved but also more widely. In that connection, it was essential for the United Nations and the Security Council to set up adequate mechanisms to prevent such situations so that such Member States could effectively protect their sovereignty and territorial integrity. In addressing problems relating to the maintenance of international peace and security, the Security Council should act on the premise that small States were the most vulnerable to external threats and to interference in their internal affairs.

56. It was generally known that small States, in endeavouring to build up their nations on firm economic foundations, inevitably found themselves at a disadvantage in creating and maintaining adequate armed forces since the financial and human resources that were vital for the stabilization of their economies had to be mobilized for purposes of defence. Because of their special circumstances, such small States were not in a position to provide for themselves the military capability to ward off external aggression or interference and, for that reason, their security depended, first, on adherence

by all Member States to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and, second, on the willingness and ability of Member States to come to the assistance of small States that had been victims of violations of those principles by other States.

57. Moreover, the inherent weakness of the socio-economic structure of small States made them a particular prey to the territorial and other ambitions of other States. Since the economies of small States depended on two or more primary products, external aggression exposed them to considerable economic disruption.

58. The question inevitably arose as to the measures that might be taken by the international community to ensure the security of small States. In his report, the Secretary-General drew attention to the guidelines for appropriate types of confidence-building measures endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 43/78 H of 7 December 1988. While he agreed with one of the confidence-building measures, involving the pursuit of regional solutions to regional problems, he said that there had been recent instances of acts of aggression committed against a small State by a State from the same region. In that connection, the General Assembly and the Security Council might study the possibility of setting up machinery for preventive action whereby a small State would give notice of a potential threat to its sovereignty from another State. While he did not wish to minimize the importance of the regional security arrangements envisaged by the Charter, he nevertheless pointed out that, as recent experience showed, acts of aggression had been committed, for one reason or another, by more powerful States within their own region. In such situations, the international community must take expeditious and concerted action to protect a small State which had become the victim of aggression.

59. There were practical difficulties in defining the concept of "small State". Although two obvious criteria for categorizing a State as small were the size of its territory and the size of its population, it could be said that a small State was one which had a very limited defence capacity. A large proportion of the States Members of the United Nations did not possess adequate resources to resist acts of aggression or any threat to their security and they were therefore dependent on appropriate external arrangements. Sri Lanka firmly believed that, with the emergence of a large number of independent sovereign States as a result of the decolonization process, the protection and security of small States had become one of the major responsibilities of the international community. In that connection, it once again called on the United Nations to take special measures to help small Member States to protect their sovereignty, territorial integrity and security. If all Member States committed themselves to unconditional respect for the principles of the Charter of the United Nations there would be no need for such measures, but until that happened the Security Council and the General Assembly should take the necessary steps to ensure that small States could also enjoy the much-desired and long-awaited goal of universal peace and security.

60. Mr. McKINNON (New Zealand) said that, for his country, as for all small States, the United Nations was important, particularly as a means of ensuring

collective security. The reliance which small States placed on the collective security provisions of the Charter largely determined the Charter's effectiveness. The most important criterion for evaluating the security arrangements of the United Nations was not the additional comfort they gave to large and powerful States but the level of protection they afforded to the small and powerless. The protection and security of small States was not an additional task of the Organization but was at the very core of its purposes and principles.

61. The membership of the Organization now included a large number of small States which were increasingly aware of their common interests and of the benefit of collective action to defend them. Groups such as the Forum of Small States (FOSS) and the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) had proved their value. FOSS placed great importance on the principle of the equitable representation of States in the various organs of the United Nations, and AOSIS had made a significant contribution to the preparations for and holding of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States which had been held in Barbados in 1994.

62. Small States had a direct interest in ensuring transparency and accountability throughout the Organization. That was particularly important in connection with the Security Council. The decisions taken by the Council must, to the maximum extent possible, reflect the views of all Member States and reforms which would achieve that end would be very widely supported by small States. The question of enlarging the membership of the Security Council was also important. The majority of small States would have no interest in enlarging the membership of the Council merely for the benefit of large and powerful States. Nor was it desirable to create new categories of States enjoying specific privileges. Given the current membership of the United Nations and the numbers being considered for an expanded Council, it was clear that the majority of small States would still serve infrequently on the Council.

63. In conclusion, he expressed appreciation to the Secretary-General for his report on the protection and security of small States and thanked the delegation of Maldives for introducing the draft resolution under consideration, of which New Zealand was a sponsor. It had been useful for the Assembly to take the time to consider the issue under a separate agenda item. It was equally important, however, that it should remain at the centre of attention in the United Nations, and the resolution under consideration would help to achieve that end.

64. Mr. LEUNG (Fiji) said that Fiji was one of the sponsors of the draft resolution introduced by the representative of Maldives and that it associated itself with the comments of the delegations which had spoken in support of the draft resolution. Fiji was a small island State whose isolated geographic position presented ample opportunities for criminal activity. External threats to Fiji's security could stem from international trafficking in drugs, money laundering or the transboundary movement of hazardous wastes through its national waters. Small States usually had common geographic, social and economic characteristics which magnified such threats to their security and

limited their ability to respond rapidly and effectively to the problems which arose.

65. The delegation of Fiji was in favour of the preparation of a programme of action containing concrete measures which could be taken at the regional and international levels. One way of achieving that was in the context of confidence-building measures, and Fiji would welcome further efforts by the Secretary-General to secure adoption of suitable long-term measures. In that connection the granting of observer status in the General Assembly to the South Pacific Forum was welcome because it would provide a link between small States and the United Nations.

66. The draft resolution before the Committee served as a reminder to the international community that the problems of small States needed to be tackled on a continuing basis, and the Fiji delegation hoped that the international system, the shape of which had changed with the ending of the cold war, would duly accommodate the interests of small States. Since they did not have the independent capability to defend themselves against threats to their security, small States had to count on the assistance of the United Nations.

67. The eve of the fiftieth anniversary of the Organization was an opportune moment to reassess the ways in which it could solve the security problems of small States and respond better to their future development needs. It was to be hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus.

68. Mr. CHANDRA CHALISE (Nepal) said that the Nepalese delegation fully supported the observation made by the Secretary-General in his report (A/49/353) about the paramount importance of creating a climate of support which could serve as a basis for protecting the security of small States. The issue of the security of small States assumed added importance in the context of their inherent vulnerability to threats of a political, social, economic and cultural nature. Enhancement of the preventive capabilities of the Security Council and the United Nations as a whole could provide a better response to such threats. Nepal was firmly convinced that international relations must be built on the principles of respect for territorial integrity, sovereign equality, peaceful settlement of disputes, and the promotion of international cooperation.

69. An effective United Nations was impossible without the confidence of all States, large and small. Small States made up the majority of the membership of the United Nations; they placed special trust in it and, since they lacked adequate means of countering threats to their security, regarded it as the ultimate guarantor of that security. The delegation of Nepal agreed fully that the security of small States could best be safeguarded by enhancing the effectiveness of the United Nations, and especially the Security Council, and it had once again supported and co-sponsored the draft resolution introduced by the representative of Maldives.

70. The unbreakable link between peace and development could not be overemphasized. Many small States had to cope with hardships imposed by their difficult geographic position, century-old isolation, limited resource base and

poor infrastructure. Extreme poverty, recurrent natural calamities and, of late, increasing ethnic and social tensions were undermining the peace and stability of small countries and threatening their burgeoning democratization. In the view of the Nepalese delegation, democratization must be complemented by increased international economic cooperation to improve the social and economic living conditions which constituted the foundation underpinning the democracy, freedom and stability of small States.

71. Mr. LAING (Belize) said that the delegation of Belize endorsed the views stated earlier in the meeting by the representative of Antigua and Barbuda on behalf of the countries of the Caribbean Community. Belize perceived the threats to the security of small States as twofold. Firstly, there were threats of an internal nature. They included the illegal use or threat of force by domestic opponents of the civil order. In international law such threats were generally deemed internal even when there was involvement of mercenaries and other assistance from the outside. Just as serious were such threats as the distribution of drugs and other harmful substances. In view of the inability of small States themselves to provide the necessary defence mechanisms, Belize called upon the United Nations to expand its assistance through the agencies involved in the fight against narcotic drugs.

72. Another internal threat stemmed from the violence and lawlessness learned by young people from the mass information media, especially television. Most small States did not have sufficient resources to counteract such influences, for example by broadcasting their own television programmes. There too, the assistance of the United Nations was needed, in particular the adoption by the General Assembly of appropriate resolutions about the transnational flow of information-technology products which promoted violence and had a negative impact on people's outlook.

73. The second type of security problem consisted of the strictly external threats - when one State directly threatened another. Obviously, the general prescriptions of international law applied to small as well as large States, but the generally accepted remedies were largely useless in the case of small States. Consideration should be given to the possibility of adopting the following measures: further creative development of the concept of preventive diplomacy; confidence-building and the other modalities discussed in "An Agenda for Peace"; intensification of the security dimension in the cooperation of States or groups of States with their former metropolitan countries, for example within the Commonwealth; participation by small States in United Nations peace-keeping activities; and development of trans-regional and subregional mechanisms such as the Forum of the Association of South-East Asian Nations and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe.

AGENDA ITEM 85: SCIENCE AND PEACE

74. The CHAIRMAN suggested that, since no documents had been issued on the item, its consideration should be deferred to the following meeting.

75. It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 86: QUESTION OF THE COMPOSITION OF THE RELEVANT ORGANS OF THE UNITED NATIONS

76. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should defer consideration of the item until the fiftieth session of the General Assembly.

77. It was so decided.

78. The CHAIRMAN stated that the Committee had thus concluded its consideration of agenda item 86.

79. He suggested that in accordance with the established practice the Committee should request the Rapporteur to submit reports directly to the General Assembly on the items which had been concluded.

80. It was so decided.

OTHER MATTERS

81. The CHAIRMAN drew the Committee's attention to document A/C.4/49/7, which contained a letter from the President of the General Assembly addressed to the Chairman of the Committee suggesting that Member States should present in writing for transmission to the Fifth Committee their views on the report of the Secretary-General on the restructuring of the Secretariat (A/49/336) submitted under agenda item 105 entitled "Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations".

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.